

## **AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

Please amend the claims as indicated in the listing of claims below.

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

### **Listing of Claims**

Claims 1-3 cancelled.

4. (New) Ball joint with thermal protection which is of application to suspension and steering systems or stabilizer bars which are located in the vicinity of an source of excessive heat generation such as a brake and which starts from the basic incorporation of a swivel housing (1) on which one of the suspension components or equivalent is attached and which presents in its interior a housing (2) accommodating a bush (3) which rests and turns in sliding contact on a ball head (4) of a knuckle stem (5) provided with a dust boot (6) linked by way of its base to the swivel housing (1) and by its neck (7) to an upper section (8) of the knuckle stem (5), and with a thermal protector (9) integrated in the ball joint protecting the dust boot (6) from high temperatures generated in the surrounding area, characterised in that it incorporates a connecting ring (12) which has a base (13) and a side face from which the project a series of tabs (14), which is previously linked to the neck (7) of the dust boot (6) by superinjection or pressure and/or gluing, and in that the thermal protector (9) presents a horizontal upper face with a series of flexible radial plates (10) that define interiorly a circular opening (11) which is fixed to the connecting ring (12) by pressure of the plates (10) on the tabs (14) until they pass over them, with the result that said plates (10) are engaged between the tabs (14) and the base (13) of the connecting ring (12).

5. (New) Ball joint with thermal protector (9) according to claim 1 characterised in that the thermal protector (9) takes the form of a hood which extends initially in the horizontal upper

face and is prolonged inferiorly by way of sloping side edges which terminate in vertical walls (16) defining a spacious cutaway (15) which leaves the dust boot (6) partly exposed in the sector opposite the sector of the ball joint facing the heat source, said vertical walls (16) being separated from the dust boot (6) defining an air chamber between both which produces the thermal insulation of the dust boot (6).